



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Robert R. Neall, Secretary

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools

Child Care Program Closure Recommendations UPDATED 5/21/2020

This guidance accompanies COVID-19 FAQs for Childcare Settings

Closure of a child care program is based on CDC and Maryland Department of Health/Maryland State Department of Education guidance, done in consultation with the local health department and in coordination with the licensing specialist. This is not an exhaustive list of circumstances where a program should close. Details of each case may result in additional circumstances where a program should close as determined by local health department assessment of level of risk. Closure could be 14 days or more and reopening decisions are made on a case by case basis.

Monitoring a child care program for possible COVID-19 requires close communication between child care program staff and parents. Parents should be encouraged to report illness within their household, children and themselves during drop-off symptom screening to help inform decisions related to site closure. Child care programs should monitor absences among children and staff according to CDC guidance. Information regarding absences due to COVID-19 symptoms will assist child care programs when consulting with local health departments about closure.

Closure Recommendation

For the purposes of this guidance, a **probable case of COVID-19 is a person** (i.e., a child care staff member, child, or another person) with symptoms of COVID-19 regardless of whether they are tested or when test results are not known.

A child care program should **CLOSE** if:

1. There is a **LABORATORY CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE OR PROBABLE CASE** who was present in the child care program building within 48 hours prior to developing COVID-19 symptoms, **AND** had [close, prolonged contact](#) as defined by the CDC, with program staff and/or children
2. There is a **LABORATORY CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE** who is **ASYMPTOMATIC**, was present in the child care program building **AND** had [close, prolonged contact](#) as defined by the CDC, with program staff and/or children

NOTE: If the person with confirmed or probable COVID-19 is a parent (or other household member) of a child in care and their only close, prolonged contact with the child care program staff and/or children was with their own child, the program may not be required to close if the child is asymptomatic.

Closure Process

When a child care program is informed of a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19, the program should begin the process for closure. The child care program director/family child care provider should contact the local health department and notify the licensing specialist who will assist the program with the closure process and additional actions to be taken.

Children affected by a child care program closure due to a COVID-19 case or probable case should quarantine at home for a minimum of 14 days and not seek child care in an alternative child care program. Child care program staff should also quarantine at home for a minimum of 14 days. The development of COVID-19 symptoms in the program's children, parents, and staff should be monitored by the child care program director/family child care provider during quarantine as this may impact when the program can re-open and when a child or staff member may return to the program.

NOTE: The length of time for closure should be determined by the local health department in consultation with the licensing specialist. Closure may be shortened, and the child care program may be able to reopen, if a person with symptoms of COVID-19 is tested for COVID-19 and results are negative. Likewise, closure may be longer for a family child care program when the affected person is a household member of the provider who must be released from isolation before the 14-day quarantine can begin for the provider. Reopening decisions and approvals are made on a case by case basis.